

**Water/Wastewater Commissioners’
Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2014**

Present: Robert E. Courage, Chairman
Dale A. White, Vice-Chairman
Michael Putnam, Member
David Boucher, Director
Darlene Bouffard, Recording Secretary

Call to Order

Chairman Courage called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Decisions

Approval of Meeting Minutes – Vice-Chairman White made the motion to approve the minutes of the December 10, 2013 meeting. Commissioner Putnam seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Vice-Chairman White made the motion to approve the minutes of the December 23, 2013 meeting. Commissioner Putnam seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Water Users Fee/Tax Collector’s Warrant – The Commissioners signed the Tax Collector’s Warrant for collection of taxes in the matter of water users fees for the December 2013 Bill Commitment 131231 and for the December 2013 Final Bills issued.

Sewer Users Fee/Tax Collector’s Warrant – The Commissioners signed the Tax Collector’s Warrant for collection of taxes in the matter of sewer users fees for the December 2013 Bill Commitment 131231 and for the December 2013 Final Bills issued.

Septage Receiving Facility Retainage Disbursement Request – Director Boucher explained that a discrepancy in numbers was identified in the disbursement request and that Stantec will contact the Weston & Sampson administrator. Building certification has been received. Director Boucher feels it does meet those requirements and recommends it be signed. There were no questions. Upon approval, Director Boucher will send this to Stantec for completion.

2014 Water Utilities Department Budget – Director Boucher explained that nothing has changed since the last meeting. Director Boucher received the operating and default budgets today from Mr. Jack Sheehy, Director of Financial Operations. Differences between the 2014 proposed and default budgets were identified and compared with the 2013 budget/spreadsheet. Vice-Chairman White asked if the town goes to a default budget would that automatically require a default Water Utilities Budget. Chairman Courage said no, residents would need to vote the proposed Water Utilities operating budget down in order to enact a Water Utilities default budget. Vice-Chairman White said he is pleased that the proposed budget increases are small, amounting to 0.3% and 0.5%. Commissioner Putnam moved to

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approve the 2014 Water Utilities budget as presented by Director Boucher. Chairman Courage seconded. All were in favor.

Director Boucher noted not all 2013 budget expenditures have been processed and paid yet, which usually is complete by February or March. Vice-Chairman White asked if remaining budget funds would go into the capital reserves. Director Boucher said that is correct, it cannot be touched.

Activities Report – Vice-Chairman White noticed a hydrant on Souhegan Street that had not been cleared of snow. Director Boucher made a note to check on that. Commissioner Putnam indicated that a water meter was split during the cold weather and the resident was very pleased with the response for the repair and replacement. Chairman Courage said that Pennichuck has a hydrant at the entrance of Reserve Way on Federal Hill; however, Pennichuck does not shovel out that hydrant. If access to that hydrant would become necessary, the Milford Fire Department would not know if it is a town or a Pennichuck hydrant. The town should therefore be sure to dig out and clear that Pennichuck hydrant. Director Boucher indicated a backhoe is used to clear hydrants on rural roads and those in the center of town are shoveled. He added that some west Milford residents receive water from the Town of Wilton.

Director Boucher talked with TF Moran on the proposed Elm Street water main extension work. Surveying will begin tomorrow.

2014 Warrant Article – As one of the two Water Utilities warrant articles being considered for presentation, a replacement dewatering unit could cost approximately up to \$800,000, but without a firm number, it was felt it should not be presented at the March 2014 town meeting. Engineering costs need to be better defined. Purchasing a sludge pump would allow delaying this large project another year while clarifying details. Vice-Chairman White noted when the Water Utilities Department begins accepting septage from neighboring towns, that increased septage revenue will help offset operating expenses. Vice-Chairman White feels without definite project numbers we should delay presenting this, or any, project to the voters. Director Boucher agreed. Odor control is the biggest issue of dewatering operations and there are other means to deal with odors, such as utilizing enclosures. Commissioner Putnam asked if the belt filter press is operating smoothly. Director Boucher said it is, however, when the belts break, it is getting increasingly difficult to obtain new belts and rollers for our aging belt filter press equipment. Commissioner Putnam asked if an upgrade would be more efficient. Director Boucher said the energy use would be about the same since the centrifuge requires much less recycled water.

Chairman Courage said the compost can be hauled off the premises. Director Boucher said this alternative would cost more. Chairman Courage does not support the number; originally the cost was approximately \$250,000 now it is a bigger number, which would be a hard sell. Director Boucher indicated some of the numbers are due to the rough engineering estimate and he expects a better number could be obtained. Commissioner Putnam agreed, stating it is better to get everything lined up and wait until next year to present to the voters. Commissioner Putnam wants the engineering to be put out to bid.

Miscellaneous Water Utilities Department Project Updates – Director Boucher said a decision is needed on the Wright-Pierce agreement for the Dram Cup water storage tank. Vice-Chairman White said that would only apply if approved at town meeting, to which Director Boucher agreed. Director Boucher asked if this could be paid out of capital reserve funds. Chairman Courage said the engineering

activities should be paid out of capital reserve funds. Director Boucher indicated this project would involve a ten year bond; however, the initial engineering costs would not be part of that. Vice-Chairman White asked whether everything would be covered financially. Director Boucher said yes, there is a packet of information and he believes it can be done for less than the \$330,000 warrant article. The grant amount is \$360,000 and the first quote received was \$211,000. He expects the project will come in under that amount. Vice-Chairman White asked whether warrant article funds instead of capital reserve funds could be utilized for the project engineering cost. Commissioner Putnam said we need to make sure the warrant article specifies the engineering costs will be covered because if it does not read that way, the funds cannot be used for engineering. Chairman Courage said the engineering had been included for the septage project and that he would vote reluctantly in favor of this, due to a previous discussion about putting the engineering out to bid. He said both Wright-Pierce and Stantec are good companies. Vice-Chairman White said he believes firmly in competitive bidding. Chairman Courage said he is in favor of having the engineering phase of the Dram Cup rehab project being done with Wright-Pierce. Commissioner Putnam asked if Mr. Courage thinks it is too late to change. Chairman Courage said this company has done a lot of the ground work on this project and his concern is that we need to receive bids in order to get competitive pricing. Vice-Chairman White said this is the only project this happened on. Chairman Courage disagreed, stating the same happened with the Curtis Well project. Director Boucher said this company submitted a bid for another project but they did not win. Vice-Chairman White said they have done so much ground work on this that it is kind of too late to change, but in the future we need to do it earlier. Chairman Courage said now there is a format for an RFP that can be used in the future. The RFP can be very general and still get three bids returned for review and a decision. Commissioner Putnam said since they have done the ground work at this point, let's just go with it. Chairman Courage added that the overall quality of their work is good, however, in the past, project progress would reduce and begin to drag. Competitive pricing keeps everyone sharp.

Vice-Chairman White made the motion to award Wright-Pierce the engineering phase of the Dram Cup project at a cost of \$30,000. Commissioner Putnam seconded. All voted in favor. Commissioner Putnam recommended, and Director Boucher agreed, to obtain three competitive bids for future Water Utilities projects.

Future Appointments/Meetings:

Tomorrow night is the Budget Advisory Committee meeting to seek support of the water tank lining project. The non-public session not held this evening, will be on the next agenda. Director Boucher will prepare the non-public minutes from the previous Commissioners' meeting.

The next Commissioners' meeting will be Tuesday, January 21, 2014 at the Water Utilities Department, 564 Nashua Street.

Adjournment:

Commissioner Putnam moved to adjourn at 6:55 p.m. Vice-Chairman White seconded. All were in favor.

Robert E. Courage, Chairman

Date

Dale A. White, Vice-Chairman

Date

Michael E. Putnam, Commissioner

Date